

REMARKS

Claims 10-12 are currently pending in the present application.

Claims 10-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by EPO patent document EP 0 239 442. Claim 12 stands allowed.

The Applicant is requesting entry of the foregoing proposed amendments in order to place the application into condition for allowance.

In the March 19, 2004 Final Office Action, the Examiner noted that the applicant has not claimed that the mortar is applied to the tubes and their projections separately from the assembly step, and that therefore the claims were being read to include application of mortar to the tube during the assembly step.

In view of the Examiner's helpful comments, and in order to advance this Application to issue, the Applicants are requesting amendment of claim 10 to recite the separate application of mortar as suggested. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the pending § 102(b) rejection and allowance of claims 10-11.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing requested amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that, upon entry of the foregoing amendments, the claims will be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the foregoing amendments and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 10-12 is respectfully requested.

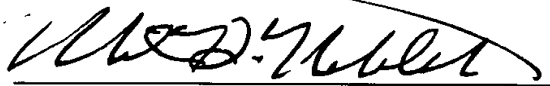
If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in

general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #1684/44953DV).

May 19, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.D. Evans", written over a horizontal line.

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